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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 34th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DINU (Romania)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 124: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued) (A/47/484)

1. Mr. BAUDOT (Acting Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/484) called for in paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 46/240, recalled that an earlier report on the same subject had been submitted to the Assembly in 1989 (A/44/605/Add.2). That report referred to the ad hoc arrangement, under paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 3101 (XXVIII), whereby four groups of Member States were established for the apportionment of the costs of peace-keeping operations financed through assessed contributions. The ad hoc arrangement had subsequently been modified by successive Assembly resolutions.

2. In the absence of any strictly objective criteria for the composition of the four groups, the Secretary-General suggested in his report that the Assembly might wish to consider the automatic allocation of least developed countries to group (d) and, more generally, the question of increasing the number of groups. Annex II provided an illustration of how anomalies might be determined if per capita national income were used as a criterion: it illustrated one possible approach to the problem and did not contribute a formal proposal. It was, of course, the business of Member States to decide how best to apportion the costs of peace-keeping operations, and the Secretariat could prepare alternative illustrative tables on the basis of whatever other criteria might be suggested.

3. Ms. SLATER (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community, said that the Twelve would consider carefully all requests concerning the composition of existing groups. However, they believed that any modification must be restricted to legitimate anomalies, bearing in mind one of the principal criteria set forth in General Assembly resolution 3101 (XXVIII), namely, the capacity of States to pay. Accordingly, allocation to groups (b), (c) or (d) should not be seen as permanent but as depending on long-term developments in a State's capacity to pay. Her delegation recalled the statement made by Spain when that country had made a voluntary move to group (b) and emphasized that any modifications must address all the anomalies noted in the Secretary-General's report.

4. Mr. NEJEDLY (Czechoslovakia) said that the report of the Secretary-General offered a just and simple solution to the problem of anomalies in the composition of the existing groups, based on objective and broadly recognized criteria. As all members of the Committee were aware, their task was to eliminate anomalies rather than to devise an entirely new system, and the changes suggested in annex II would not be numerous. His country's economic situation made it essential that a decision not be delayed. Although it might be useful to have a working group study the question further, his delegation strongly believed that a decision along the lines suggested in the Secretary-General's report should be adopted at the current session.

5. Mr. FERJANI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that the Secretary-General's proposal to place all Member States with per capita national income averages at or above $5,000 in group (b) was incompatible with the criteria applied by the General Assembly in the past with respect to movements between different groups. It also resulted in the allocation of a number of small developing countries to the same group as powerful industrial States, while a number of other countries with strong economies were placed in group (c).

6. Per capita national income was not acceptable, either to the Committee on Contributions or to the General Assembly itself, as the only criterion by which to determine a State's capacity to pay. The way to address the existing anomalies was to follow the past practice of the General Assembly, in other words, to examine individually each request by a State wishing to move from one group to another. His delegation would have no objection to any such request, but could not support the proposal contained in the report of the Secretary-General.

The meeting rose at 3.55 p.m.